DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 206 923 CE 030 116

AUTHOR	Sher, Jonathan
TITLE	Linking Education and Local Development: An International Perspective.
INSTITUTION	National Inst. for Work and Learning, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Vocational and Adult Education (ED), Washington, D.C.
BUREAU NO	498MH00022
PUB DATE	Jun 81
CONTRACT	300-80-0786
NOTE	37p.; Not available in paper copy due to poor print quality. For related documents see CE 030 110-119.
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Access to Education; Adult Education; Articulation (Education); Case Studies; Change Strategies; Educational Needs; Educational Planning; Educational Policy; *International Programs; *Linking Agents; Nontraditional Education; Policy Formation; Position Papers; *Program Development; Relevance (Education); Rural Areas; *Rural Development; *School Role
IDENTIFIERS	*Education and Local Development Project

ABSTRACT

The Education and Local Development (ELD) Project was designed to conduct research and facilitate cooperation among Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries that would result in better understanding of existing relationships between education and local development, identification of the potential effects of alternative methods of linking education and local development, documentation of the experiences of member countries in this area, and a set of policy-relevant conclusions for use by policymakers in both the education and development sectors. Analysis of the major issues affecting the linking of education and rural development and examination of a number of case studies of projects designed to link educational and rural development programs resulted in a group of conclusions. Included among these are (1) general conclusions applicable to all elements of ELD work; (2) specific conclusions about the role of formal education in rural development; and (3) specific conclusions about the role of non-formal and adult education in rural development. (Related reports on rural development in America are available through ERIC--see note.) (MN)

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National Institute for Work and Learning has developed documents CE 030 111-119 within a project sponsored by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

ED206923

Linking Education and Local Development: An International Perspective

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CE 030 116

This paper reflects an international perspective on education and rural development. It is based on discussions presented at a CERI conference on Education and Local Development (ELD) held at Stornoway, Scotland, 1-5 June 1981.

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Education and Local Development

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs
I. ELD Project History	1-16
Context of Project	1-11
Development of ELD Work	12-16
II. ELD Activities and Reports	17-53
Country Participation	17-22
Secretariat Missions and Research	23-24
Country Surveys	25-28
Field-Based Seminars	29-35
Case Studies and Special Reports	36-53
Formal Education Innovations	39-45
Non-Formal Education Innovations	46-53
III. ELD Project Conclusions	54-81
General Conclusions	57-67
Formal Education Conclusions	68-74
Non-Formal Education Conclusions	75-81

Education and Local Development

ELD Project History

1. In 1976, the CERI Governing Board authorized the initiation of Secretariat work on education issues in the remote rural areas of OECD Member countries. The resulting project on Basic Education and Teacher Support in Sparsely-Populated Areas (otherwise known as the SPA project) emphasized policies, programmes, and innovations having an impact upon the availability and quality of schooling in rural communities. The SPA frame of reference heavily emphasized the compulsory years of public education and a host of technical issues within the education system.

2. By means of an active programme of Secretariat and Member country cooperation, a significant amount of new knowledge on rural education was generated; several new directions for governmental action in this field were identified; and new national commitments to solve long-standing rural education problems were both reflected and stimulated by the SPA project. This body of work was disseminated not only through an international conference in Aurillac, France and a series of follow-up national conferences, but also through the commercial publication of an OECD/CERI book entitled Rural Education in Urbanized Nations: Issues and Innovations.

3. At the completion of the SPA project, there was a general sentiment that further rural education work could be productively carried out at an international level. However, the argument was that additional work on rural schooling per se was not as vital as an exploration of the connections between education and development in the context of local rural communities. Whereas the SPA project had looked inside of rural schools, it was suggested that any new initiative should look outward from the education system in order to understand better what education could and should do to assist in the revitalization of the rural communities being served.

4. This orientation was compatible with, but distinct from, other OECD initiatives in education. For example, there had been an earlier project which stressed community involvement in the schooling process (particularly in urban areas) but which did not systematically analyze the role of education in the community/economic development process. There was also some exploratory research on the "socio-geographic context" of education which had commenced a year earlier. And finally, a study of regional development and education had recently been completed, but, as the title implied, the units of analysis were very large geographic regions rather than small local communities.

5. The emphasis on <u>local</u> development became the most distinctive feature of the planning of this new CERI effort. It struck a responsive chord among policymakers from many OECD Member countries who had long recognized the important role education plays in national development and regional development, but also expressed serious concerns about the impact of education upon depressed and/or economically marginal local communities.

6. This concern among policymakers sprang from two sources. The first was the understanding that a wide range of local communities, and their residents, had been "left behind" in the implementation of national and regional development strategies. There was even the suspicion that certain forms of government-sponsored economic development (such as the "growth center" strategy) have actually been able to succeed only through the decline of numerous small local communities. In other words, there was a growing interest in the fate of those local communities and local population groups who had not shared adequately (or been excluded altogether) from the benefits of national and regional economic growth.

7. The second concern was that neither the role of education in the decline of these local communities nor education's potential role in their revitalization were clearly understood. Governmental interest in local level development had been manifested primarily through direct economic interventions (e.g. encouraging private sector relocation with public subsidies and tax incentives, or sponsoring such capital-intensive

development projects as road building or industrial site construction).

8. Direct attempts or explicit public sector policies designed to promote local development through educational means were all but non-existant. Yet, policymakers and development specialists were becoming increasingly aware of the fact that the success of economic development initiatives in ameliorating local conditions was dependent upon critical human/social factors--that is, factors to which education was inextricably bound. Thus, ignoring the current effects and potential contributions of education to local development (and vice-versa) was a luxury which could no longer be afforded.

9. All of these issues, as well as several related ones, were discussed during the course of a two-day planning meeting held at the OECD in February 1979. The eighteen nations represented at this session advised the Secretariat on the specific topics, tasks, and framework for cooperation which should inform an international inquiry in this area. This advice was reflected in the programme of work for a new project on Education and Local Development which was submitted to, and approved by, the CERI Governing Board in April, 1979.

10. The overriding concern of the ELD project has been to conduct research and facilitate co-operation among Member countries which results in: (a) a better understanding of existing relationships between education and local development; (b) an identification of the potential effects (positive and negative) of alternative methods of linking education and local development; (c) a documentation of the experiences of Member countries in this area, with a special emphasis on interesting and/or innovative strategies; and (d) a set of policy-relevant conclusions for use by policymakers in both the education and development sectors.

11. The original programme of work was intended to achieve these objectives through an analysis of the following group of major issues:

1. The ways in which different national and regional definitions of the key ELD concepts (i.e. "development," "local," "community," and

"education") influence the types of ELD relationships and activities found in each country.

2. The degree to which education on the one hand could and on the other hand should be directed toward local development.
3. The types of intergovernmental, administrative, and financial arrangements which are likely to improve the connections between education and local development.
4. The ways in which the "socio-geographic context" of local areas (i.e. community size, relative wealth, economic base, population characteristics, physical environment, and quality of public services) affect the relationship between education and local development.
5. The extent to which local communities can utilize "self-help" strategies to strengthen the education/development bond and the extent to which they are dependent upon "outside" assistance.
6. The degree to which governmental action in this field could and should be directed toward minority, indigenous, and other "special need" populations.
7. The political feasibility, practical limitations and institutional consequences of adapting education more fully to the needs of local development.

12. In order to implement this programme of work, the ELD project was originally divided into rural, urban and joint components--each of which included both research and operational elements. However, financial constraints within CERI and a less than enthusiastic response to the urban component by Member countries meant that the urban and joint activities were curtailed and limited (with the exception of an international conference in Italy) to a modified effort on the research side. Consequently, the actual work of the ELD project has heavily emphasized the rural component.

13. In part, this rural bias is the result of the momentum generated through CERI's earlier project on rural education. Still, the central justification here is two-fold: first, that rural issues are becoming increasingly significant within many Member countries; and second, that the

minimal level of previous information-sharing and active collaboration on rural education and rural development topics among these nations neither reflects the importance of this field nor exhausts the benefits of international cooperation here.

14. During the two year existence of the ELD project, there was one other major shift in emphasis which merits special comment. Originally, it was anticipated that equal weight would be accorded to both formal and non-formal education. If anything, the feeling was that working through the Ministry of Education in each nation would tend to bias the work toward concerns about public education for children and adolescents. In some instances, this assumption was proven correct. And yet, to a far greater extent than initially planned, the most active work and strongest interest has come from the adult, non-formal education side.

15. One explanation is that adults, not children, will be the major participants in current rural development programmes and thus, the negative consequences of adult educational deficiencies are more obvious and more keenly felt. Of equal importance is the growing realization that problems on the human side (rather than the capital side) of local development are not simply a matter of an inadequate basic education or missing technical skills (although these are by no means unknown). Rather, there appear to be serious barriers to local development which are cultural/social/attitudinal/political in nature. These problems, particularly in rural areas, often appear to be more readily amenable to solution through non-formal education means that through the formal schooling/training process.

16. In summary, the ELD project has been:

(A) Concerned with helping Member countries analyse the ways in which education affects, and is affected by, local economic development strategies;

(B) Considering education in its broadest sense as any intentional learning experience, in order to discover those areas of education--formal or non-formal, early childhood through adult--in which a significant relationship to local development can be found or

nurtured;

(C) Emphasizing the rural dimensions of ELD issues in OECD nations, but incorporating a sufficient level of urban research to help clarify which aspects are specific to a particular context and which are generalisable;

(D) Locating and documenting innovative programmes, policies and strategies directed toward improving the relationships between education and local development.

(E) Sharing the knowledge generated through this project among all the interested OECD Member countries.

ELD Activities and Reports

17. Once the ELD project became operational (May, 1979) an effort was made to identify Member countries desirous of becoming active participants in all (or part) of this project. Thirteen countries--Australia, Canada, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom (represented by both Scotland and England/Wales) and the United States--have contributed to all, or most, of the ELD activities. In addition, five other Member countries--Belgium, France, Germany, Sweden and Yugoslavia--have actively engaged in at least two aspects of the ELD programme of work.

18. From the outset, it was apparent that this project would be an ambitious one which required national governments to allocate a higher level of resources, energy and commitment than most international efforts. In many CERI projects, the issues under discussion are already well-documented and well-researched. Under these circumstances, the basic task for Member countries as well as the Secretariat is one of synthesizing data rather than generating them.

19. However, in the case of the ELD project the situation was strikingly different. Not only was there a paucity of available information on ELD issues, but there were also difficulties in locating appropriate and well-informed contact people in each country. The project's rural emphasis only exacerbated the problems in securing accurate and up-to-date information here. Trying to identify experts and review the

literature in a "field" which was so new presented problems throughout the life of this project.

20. This circumstance had two effects which permeated the ELD work. On the negative side, there were delays in the planned schedule of work--delays often caused by the absence of the relevant data. As might be expected, the data even today remain somewhat incomplete. Still, the most negative repercussion can be found in the fact that several countries diminished their level of involvement in the ELD work as soon as the amount of data generation/research necessary to participate fully became apparent.

21. Nevertheless, the positive side of this situation is that those countries making the effort to overcome the lack of readily available knowledge here have ended up producing valuable new information and insights. Although major changes will not be made overnight, it appears that the ELD perspective is giving policymakers a useful new tool with which to approach some long-standing problems and stimulating a re-thinking of governmental action (or the lack thereof) in this area of inquiry. In addition, several national government officials have indicated that the ELD work has helped them to discover a range of small scale, local level activities and thus to learn more about what was really happening within their own nation.

22. Work on this project was carried out in four categories: (a) Secretariat missions and research; (b) surveys of ELD policies and programmes in Member countries; (c) field-based seminars on key ELD themes; and (d) case studies/special reports on ELD innovations. The work completed in each of these four categories will now be summarized.

23. Secretariat missions were carried out in order to help Secretariat members gain a deeper understanding of the broad spectrum of ELD-related work already underway in Member countries. In addition, missions were conducted for which the purpose was either to assist Member governments in the development of special reports and other ELD information, or to aid in the resolution of ELD-related problems. A modest amount

of direct co-operation between the Secretariat and Member countries (focusing on planning ELD-related ventures) also took place.

24. Secretariat research was conducted on both the urban and rural dimensions of ELD issues. In part, this meant analysing all the documents and publications submitted by Member governments and/or national experts in order to ascertain any cross-national patterns or generalisable trends. In addition, literature reviews were conducted not simply on education and local development (since, as noted earlier, available documentation in this exact field is scanty) but also on relevant materials from vocational and adult education, human resource planning, community economic development, agriculture, regional policy, political science and sociology. The results of this effort will be reflected both in the conclusions noted herein and in the final ELD book.

25. Supporting and extending the Secretariat's own research was a vital element of the ELD programme of work: the Country Survey. This Survey was sent to all Member countries in June, 1979 as a first step in establishing a knowledge base upon which the ELD project could build. The intent was both to clarify the specific types of information the Secretariat needed and to encourage the production of national contributions sharing enough common features to facilitate cross-national comparisons. More specifically, the survey instrument contained the following elements:

(a) Definitions and Content
(b) Priority Issues
(c) Target Areas and Populations
(d) Key National Policies and Programmes
(e) Key Regional and Local Policies and Programmes
(f) Relevant Data and Research
(g) Innovative and Exemplary Projects
(h) Contact People and Sources of Further Information

26. Nearly all the Member governments choosing to actively participate in the ELD project submitted responses to the Country Survey. As might be

expected, the quality and comprehensiveness of these responses varied significantly from country to country. As a whole, however, these survey responses constitute a valuable source of information and insight on the existence and variety of education/local development linkages in Member nations. The Scottish ELD report, which has been sent as a background document to all delegates to the Final ELD Conference, is an example of a particularly thorough and well-done country survey response. The substance of all these survey responses strongly influenced the conclusions noted in this document and will also be explicitly reflected in the forthcoming ELD book.

27. Early in the project, it became clear that people working on ELD issues tended to feel isolated--particularly from their counterparts in other nations. Even within countries, there was often not a pre-existing awareness of the range of organizations and institutions (governmental and non-governmental) having a strong affinity with the ELD work. Thus, a second survey was issued by the Secretariat to appropriate experts, as well as the official ELD contact people, in each country.

28. This second survey was narrowly focused on identifying and gathering descriptive materials on the network of public and private bodies working on ELD-related pursuits. Although the reaction to the survey was mixed (with some nations contributing profusely, while others sent almost nothing) the range of groups identified through this exercise is fascinating and serves to underscore the point that much ELD related work <u>is</u> already underway today. A preliminary version of this "Information Guide to Rural Education and Developement Organisations in the OECD Member Countries" will be issued by July, 1981.

29. The next major element of the ELD programme of work was the sponsorship of a series of week-long field-based seminars. These international seminars served as the primary forum for the exchange of information and the mutual exploration of key ELD themes during the course of this project. The field-based meetings (designed to combine plenary sessions

on general topics with related site visits and discussions about a specific ELD innovation) proved popular among participants and productive from the Secretariat's point of view.

30. The first such meeting was held in Kuusamo, Finland during September, 1979. This conference brought together representatives from fifteen Member countries in order to carry out the detailed planning necessary to implement the rural component of the ELD project. As a result of this meeting, a common framework for both identifying rural ELD innovations and preparing the special reports and case studies was established. In addition, agreement was reached on the major themes around which the rural ELD work, in general, and the other field-based seminars, in particular, should be organized. These themes were:
1. The Role of Formal Education and Youth Programmes in Rural Development
2. The Role of Non-Formal and Adult Education in Rural Development
3. ELD Issues in Rural Minority and Indigenous Communities
4. The Educational Role of Development Agencies.

31. It is interesting to note that the only one of these which did not later attract sufficient interest and support was theme 4. In large measure, this one failed to develop as hoped because of administrative and coordination problems at the national level. In other words, since CERI's primary contact with Member governments is through Education Ministries, there were considerable difficulties in organising an activity which focused on agencies falling outside the jurisdiction of these same Ministries. Ironically, this experience demonstrated the lack of communication and effective coordination between national education and development authorities which the ELD project was designed to investigate.

32. In April, 1980, a seminar was held in Alaska (USA) on "ELD Issues in Rural Minority and Indigenous Communities." This meeting, jointly sponsored by the University of Alaska, the U.S. National Institute of Education, and CERI, attracted representatives of the Aboriginal

community in Australia, the Maori community in New Zealand and different minority communities within the United States, as well as delegates from several other OECD nations. Discussions centered on the unique burdens borne by minority and indigenous populations and the special implications for effectively linking education and local development in such communities. Coupled with a general analysis of government interventions to upgrade education and to promote economic development in these communities was an opportunity to visit Native Alaskan villages where a variety of ELD-related activities were in operation.

33. During the same month, the only urban ELD conference was held in Venice, Italy under the auspices of the Italian Ministry of Education and CERI. This meeting brought together delegates from those Member countries having a special interest in the urban dimensions of ELD issues. Like the rural seminars, this conference combined plenary discussions with relevant field visits. The Venice seminar was useful both in fostering an international exchange of information and experience in this emerging field and in helping the Secretariat to understand better the diverse ways in which education and local development interacted in metropolitan regions. This, in turn, clarified those ELD concerns which are "universal" rather than a function of their specific"socio-geographic" context.

34. In October, 1980 the fourth field-based seminar was convened in Barco de Avila, Spain around the theme of "The Role of Non-Formal and Adult Education in Rural Development." Jointly sponsored by the National Institute of Education Sciences (INCIE) of the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science and CERI, this meeting featured a cross-section of Spain's top officials, experts and practitioners in this field along with delegates from nine other nations. Particular attention was paid to the role which non-governmental organizations and institutions can productively play in the drive to prepare rural adults to benefit more fully from public and private sector programmes of economic development. Through field visits and special sessions, the case of Spain's "escuela campesina" (peasant school) movement was examined as an illustration of a non-formal ELD rural initiative. Other Spanish activities were reviewed along with similar innovations from the other nations in attendance.

35. The fifth, and final, ELD seminar was held at the Château de la Muette in Paris after organizational difficulties precluded holding this meeting at the rural site originally scheduled. This seminar centered on the "Role of Formal Education and Youth Programmes in Rural Development" and was attended by delegates from ten Member Countries. Given the brevity of this session, the inherent distractions and formalities of meetings held at the Château, and the lack of field visits to anchor and focus the discussions, this seminar did not compare favorably with the earlier field-based ones. Nevertheless, the participants made useful contributions toward a common understanding of how schools (from the pre-primary through post-secondary levels) affect the local development process--even if their impact is often indirect and inadvertent. This seminar also highlighted discussions on topics like the development implications of rural school closures, the problems and prospects of "locally-relevant" education programs and the relationships between major types of vocational education and major rural development strategies.

36. From the beginning of the project, it was apparent that the connections between education and local development were often subtle and almost always complex. In addition, the great variety of interactions uncovered made it clear that no single model could accurately capture or explain the essence of these linkages. Accordingly, it became obvious that survey responses, Secretariat literature reviews, and occasional seminars (although very valuable in their own right) would not generate information of sufficient breadth and depth to allow a sophisticated analysis of the ELD experience in Member countries.

37. This realisation, coupled with the more mundane task of adequately describing and documenting interesting ELD innovations, made the need for a series of case studies and special reports imperative. It may well be that these case studies and special reports will have more impact and a longer-lasting value than any other element of the ELD programme. A significant amount of effort, energy and thought have gone into the preparation of these documents and their quality is a tribute to the competence and dedication of the authors.

38. Several of these case studies and special reports have now been completed and others exist in draft form. All of them will be available by the end of 1981 and several will be incorporated in the final ELD book. Given the importance of these papers in the ELD project (as well as their intrinsic fascination) it seems appropriate to briefly summarise a representative cross-section here. Thus, six of the reports on formal education innovations will be presented, followed by a description of six of the non-formal and adult education innovations.

39. The six special reports/case studies in the first group are united by their emphasis on the role of formal education and youth programmes in rural development. Included here are papers on innovations in Sweden, Australia, the United States, Scotland and Finland.

40. The first special report in this group is on the Öckerö project in Sweden. Öckerö is a small island off the west coast of Sweden with a lower secondary school, Brattebergskölan, serving students from neighboring islands as well as from Öckerö itself. By the late 1970's, local parents, students, teachers and administrators had come to believe that the "normal" classroom-based school experience was not adequately addressing the needs of either students or the local community. Consequently, the school day was divided into two parts: half the day would be spent on traditional academic pursuits and the other half would be used for a wide variety of experiential education activities. Many of these activities are tied to community needs and local development opportunities. For example, students now operate a community radio station serving these small islands. Students also operate a fish farming business, as well as a commercial greenhouse of their own construction from which they raise and market tomatoes. Because Swedish law precludes schools from directly operating enterprises, the Brattebergskölan community cooperatively established a non-profit organisation to manage these ventures. Financed from local contributions, philanthropic grants and the profits of student operated businesses, this community organisation is creating new opportunities for students to "learn by doing" (such as buying an old

boat which students are repairing and refurbishing for commercial use) and serving as a focal point for local development initiatives.

41. The next case study on the formal education side is about the Country Education Project (CEP) in Victoria, Australia. Begun in 1977 with funding from the Disadvantaged Country Areas Programme of the federal government's Schools Commission, the CEP now actively operates in five remote rural areas of the state of Victoria. Under the CEP's auspices, a broad spectrum of innovations and new resources have been introduced into isolated rural schools. The purpose of these activities has been not only to upgrade the overall quality of education but also to increase the "local-relevance" of these rural schools. To this end, a major emphasis has been placed on community involvement and the use of the community's human and physical resources in the learning process. Specific activities have included remedial education programmes operated through community volunteers; community surveys and community awareness schemes; joint school-community programs in music, arts/crafts, and drama; camping, environmental study and related outdoor education initiatives; community education centres; and local work experience opportunities. Interestingly, the Victoria CEP has also spawned several important non-formal ELD ventures, such as an extensive community-based, community-operated program of technical/life skills workshops for rural youths and adults; and assistance in the creation of bilingual agricultural resource materials for local Italian immigrant farmers and farmworkers. Currently, the CEP is planning to increasingly emphasize initiatives which link education, community/social development, and economic growth in the areas being served.

42. The third report here focuses on the high school vocational agriculture program in Waverly, Iowa (USA). This site was chosen as a good example of a secondary school vocational program found throughout rural America. In particular, the close relationship between the formal agricultural course offerings at the school and the informal activities of a rural youth organization called Future Farmers of America (FFA) is noteworthy. FFA and the high school work together to help interested rural students

acquire the skills they need to become successful independent farmers. To this end, students take the state-required academic courses (i.e. language, mathematics, history, etc.) plus specialized vocational courses (i.e. plant science, agricultural mechanics, farm management, livestock production, etc.). Through FFA, students simultaneously carry out coordinated projects during the course of their four years of high school including productive enterprises (small-scale, profit-making agricultural ventures developed, owned and operated by the student); improvement enterprises (practical projects, like soil conservation or fence construction, designed to increase the value or efficiency of a family-owned farm in the community); agricultural skills projects (directed toward developing a specific skill needed to own and operate a farm); and community service projects (such as conducting free soil analyses, constructing a playground for local children, or pruning trees in a local orchard). There is also a strong emphasis on developing leadership and public speaking skills among these rural youths. One of the dilemmas being faced in Iowa, as well as the rest of the U.S., is how to adapt vocational agriculture programmes to the reality of diminishing numbers of small, family farms; the growing presence of major agri-businesses corporations; and the high costs of entering farming.

43. The fourth case study examines vocational education and training in the Highlands of Scotland. Historically, there has been a marked out-migration of young people from the Highlands, generally, and the more remote villages, in particular. Whether they left in search of further education or job opportunities, relatively few returned and their absence has had a detrimental impact on attempts to revitalize Highland villages. Today, many more young people are remaining in the Highlands but the scarcity of jobs--especially jobs for which they are appropriately trained--has triggered a high rate of unemployment among both young people and adults. In recent years, a variety of government agencies and government-funded organisations have launched major programmes of rural development and major new education and training programmes in the Highlands. This study investigates the degree of coordination and cooperative action existing between the education/training schemes and

the new development projects. Highlighted are such innovations as the fish farming and forestry programmes at Inverness Technical College, and the work of Craftpoint (a new organisation funded by the Highlands and Islands Development Board) which provides training, as well as marketing and development assistance, to craftspeople in the Highlands.

44. The fifth special report in this group is on the KOKKE project and other government-supported attempts to develop schools as village centres in Finland. In recent years, the Finnish government has committed itself to actively promoting local village development as a means of halting rural depopulation and ensuring balanced national growth. The role of schools as village centres is seen as a key element in the government's overall strategy for rural development. The KOKKE project is a good example of this attempt to connect education and local development. School facilities are being used both during and after school hours for the advantage of the entire village. For example, health services, senior citizen centres, "coffee bars," and craft workshops are being housed in village schools. Efforts are also being made to revive village culture and traditions through school activities. Aside from their direct benefits, activities like those in the KOKKE project seem to be stimulating a renewal of village pride and interest in development work. Compatible initiatives are also underway on the non-formal education side in Finland through projects of the Union of Rural Municipalities and through "study circles" on local development sponsored by major political parties (such as the Centre Party's Union for Rural Education).

45. The sixth, and final, case study in the group summarised here describes the planning and implementation of rural school-based enterprises in the United States. The common element linking these innovations is the emphasis on creating real businesses operated by young people in order to improve the quality of occupational preparation, encourage the development of entrepreneurial skills appropriate in a rural economy, and contribute to local development. For example, in Brooks County, Georgia, a complete lack of day care opportunities made it difficult for women to seek employment. In response, the local secondary school built a day

care facility on school property using student labor and currently operates a centre which provides: (a) good care for young children; (b) training and work experience for the student staff; (c) the ability to seek work for local mothers; and (d) a net source of income for the school system. This same school also features a very modern student-run swine production operation on school property which is both economically profitable and an excellent training/work experience for the rural youths involved. Other similar innovations like a community newspaper operated by secondary school students in rural Arkansas and a substantial boat-building business run by young people in rural Maine are also examined.

46. As mentioned earlier, a series of case studies and special reports was also organised around the role of non-formal and adult education in rural development. Much has been written about this theme in the context of the less developed nations. The contribution of these ELD case studies is in filling a major knowledge gap about comparable work in the OECD Member countries. The six innovations summarized here are occuring in Spain, New Zealand, Wales, Switzerland, the United States, and Australia.

47. The first "non-formal" report is on the "escuela campesina" (peasant school) movement in Spain. Started in the village of La Carrera in the late 1970's by two local priests (although independent of any official Church control) there are now eighteen village-based peasant schools in the province of Avila alone. "Classes" are held in homes, churches or other available buildings and coordinated by volunteer community members having relevant skills. The "curriculum" is drawn almost entirely from the actual experiences, problems and concerns of the local peasants. The objective is to help peasants to understand better both their condition and the pragmatic steps they can take themselves in order to improve their position. Thus, the educational work of the escuela campesina has three components: (a) discussions and activities aimed at "consciousness raising" i.e. strengthening self-images, clarifying both obstacles to development and targets of opportunity, forging a collective identity,

and motivation, collective action; (b) technical lessons and practical skill development around such topics as livestock management, agricultural marketing strategies, and dairy product analysis; and (c) concrete actions to promote local development (often done in conjunction with the local peasant union) such as establishing cooperatives for buying and selling agricultural products or protesting unfair practices by agricultural middlemen.

48. The second case study in this group is about the Waahi Marae project in New Zealand. This project began as an effort by a Maori community to resist the construction of a massive power station adjacent to their tribal homeground (Waahi Marae). The government proceeded with the construction but, after several years of negotiation, a major compensation settlement was given to the local Maori community. This spurred a great deal of community planning and development on the Waahi Marae, including housing construction, the creation of community and recreational facilities, and the acquisition of more than 2000 acres of agricultural land for commercial production. In fact, a major physical and economic development programme has been launched in the wake of this compensation award. The local Maori leaders believe that this initiative must integrate an active emphasis on non-formal education. Accordingly, they have started such activities as community tutoring of Maori students; the acquisition of development-related political skills, legal knowledge, and planning techniques by local adults; the revitalisation of traditional Maori crafts, culture and tribal rituals; and the teaching of relevant technical skills (i.e. carpentry, welding, plumbing, fencing, landscaping, etc.) especially to unemployed Maori youths. The point of non-formal education here was to enhance community solidarity, promote cultural identity and provide technical knowledge so that the Maori population could effectively initiate and control the local development process.

49. The third report here focuses on the non-formal and adult education schemes sponsored by the Development Board of Rural Wales. This U.K. government-funded organisation was created in 1977 with a mandate to encourage and assist the economic and social development of Mid-Wales,

especially through an expansion of local job opportunities. Most of the Board's resources have thus far been directed toward attracting outside industries to relocate in rural Wales. Still, non-formal educational programmes related to local development have found a niche in the Board's operations. The centerpiece is the New Enterprise Promotion (NEP) scheme run in cooperation with the Manchester Business School. The basic intent is to identify and train individuals from within Wales who have either recently established, or would like to create, new businesses--especially small-scale manufacturing or craft enterprises--in Mid-Wales. The intensive training provided is geared to bolstering the confidence, developing the entrepreneurial skills, and working through the specific business problems of each participant. Recently, the Board began a simplified, simulated version of the NEP for upper secondary level students called "Young Enterprise" in which individuals (during after school hours) "create" a business from scratch and "manage" it for a year. In addition, the Board sponsors other non-formal education programmes through its business advising services and social development ventures.

5%. The fourth case study concentrates on the connections between non-formal education and local development in the Swiss canton of Jura. This small, mountainous area lying on the border between France and Switzerland has had a turbulent history of economic marginality and outside control. The report recounts this history and points out the high level of non-formal adult education present in the movement to break away from the German-dominated canton of Bern and to create a new, autonomous, French-language canton for the Jura. After an extended struggle, this goal was at least partially accomplished in 1978. Since then, there have been extensive initiatives designed to foster social/cultural development as a necessary prelude to the solution of the area's lingering political and economic problems. The assumption is that a firm cultural identity and strong community/human resource development programmes are more important (at least in the short run) than traditional, economically-oriented development strategies. Among the non-formal education efforts described are the village festivals, the Jura Cultural Animation Association, the Jura's People University, and the "consciousness-raising" and

community organizing work of a staunchly separatist local movement called the "Militants Francs-Montagnards."

51. The fifth report in this group is about non-formal community education and development in the Appalachian region of the United States. More specifically, the work of two separate organisations, the Highlander Research and Education Center and the SALT (Southern Appalachian Leadership Training) programme are highlighted. Inspired by the Danish folk school movement, the Highlander Center was created in the 1930's to help local community activists across the Southern U.S. work with and learn from each other. Over the years Highlander has been deeply involved in union organizing, civil rights struggles, and other efforts to help local people gain a measure of power and control over their own lives. Educating people to understand and organise around local development issues is a long-term emphasis--recently evidenced by a major Highlander study on land ownership patterns in Appalachia. Whereas Highlander depends on short-term workshops, the SALT programme features more intensive internships of up to a year's duration. SALT was created in the late 1970's to identify organisers (or potential organisers) of grassroots local development/social change movements and then to give them the leadership training and field-based support necessary to ensure their maximum effectiveness. A strong and mutually supporting network of these indigenous leaders has emerged and been utilised in major SALT initiatives--such as their campaign for greater parental control of local schools and greater community control of local development.

52. The sixth, and final, special report summarised here is on the work of the Aboriginal Cultural and Training Institute in Australia. The Aboriginal communities of rural Australia are, by any measure, the most disadvantaged and economically depressed in the nation. Government attitudes and policies toward the Aboriginal population have passed through clearly defined stages from elimination to protectionism to assimilation to the current policy favoring Aboriginal self-determination and self-management. As a result of this new policy, Aboriginal communities were organised around local councils having responsibility

for providing water, sewers, housing and other public services. In addition, many Aboriginal people were placed on governmental policy committees in such areas as education, the arts, employment and housing. The discovery of considerable mineral and other economically important resources on Aboriginal lands made the self-management of local development a prime concern. The role of the government-funded Aboriginal Cultural and Training Institute is to promote a broad spectrum of non-formal education opportunities designed to make Aboriginal self-management an effective reality. The Institute provides administrative and skill training for Aboriginal people serving on government policy committees; management assistance and training to local community councils; and technical assistance in establishing Aboriginal youth programmes. In addition, the Institute pursues an aggressive publishing and materials development programme to aid Aboriginal education and local development.

53. All of the preceeding case study summaries are merely descriptive overviews intended to impart a sense of both the nature of current ELD innovations and the enormous variety of activities which are encompassed by the ELD framework. The studies themselves have a strong analytic element which enables the reader to understand the complex interactions and the major strengths and weaknesses which characterize each of the innovations reviewed.

ELD Project Conclusions

54. In formulating the following set of conclusions, the ELD special reports summarised above (as well as those not described here) were a key source of information and insight. In addition, the Secretariat was able to draw upon the country survey responses and related documents submitted by Member countries in arriving at these conclusions. Supplementing these sources were the contributions of participants at the field-based ELD seminars and the Secretariat's own ELD-related missions and research.

55. Thus, the conclusions presented below have emerged from the full range of activities carried out under the resources of this project. Still, it should be understood that the conclusions noted herein are provisional and subject to further modification. Indeed, one of the major tasks of the Final ELD Conference is to review carefully and debate freely these conclusions during the various small group and plenary sessions scheduled. Participants are encouraged to suggest appropriate revisions or to propose any additional conclusions which will enhance the accuracy and utility of the current set.

56. The conclusions themselves are divided into three categories: (a) general conclusions applicable to all elements of the ELD work; (b) specific conclusions about the role of formal education in rural development; and (c) specific conclusions about the role of non-formal and adult education in rural development. The order in which conclusions are listed is essentially random and no ranking should be inferred. Further, the extent to which any particular conclusion is applicable varies from country to country. Nevertheless, there is a significant degree of commonality and comparability among the OECD nations in this particular field.

General Conclusions

I. THE RURAL POPULATION OF OECD MEMBER COUNTRIES IS NOW, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, SIGNIFICANT IN NUMERICAL TERMS

57. Rural populations are not going away. Although there has been a considerable decline in the "rural" proportion of national populations, there has not been a similar reduction in the absolute number of rural residents. At present there are approximately 220,000,000 people living in the rural areas of OECD Member nations. This is equivalent to the aggregate population of the world's twenty-five largest urban areas. Put another way, the OECD rural population is comparable to the total population of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom combined. Further, rural to urban migration patterns are slowing in most countries and have stopped, or even reversed, in other OECD nations. Such a large population should no longer be regarded as marginal or insignificant.

II. THE EDUCATION AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUE IS AS IMPORTANT IN HIGHLY DEVELOPED OECD COUNTRIES AS IT IS IN LESS DEVELOPED MEMBER NATIONS

58. Although the stages of and perspectives on economic development vary among OECD countries, the importance of ELD-related concerns does not vary a great deal. Some countries stress the urban side and some the rural side, but in most countries ELD problems and possibilities are present throughout the nation.

III. ALTHOUGH ELD ISSUES IN URBAN AND RURAL COMMUNITIES ARE VERY SIMILAR IN THEORY, THE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS AND APPROPRIATE REMEDIES ARE OFTEN DISSIMILAR

59. At the level of fundamental principles (such as those expressed in the remaining general conclusions) there are few noteworthy urban-rural differences. However, given the emphasis on local development here, the fact that differences in the local context lead to many operational differences should come as no surprise. For example, the importance of schools as community centres; the absence of a strong development infrastructure; the emphasis on self-employment and occupational diversity; and the significance of small-scale ventures tend to be characteristic of rural areas. Conversely, urban communities tend to have a far more diversified economic and educational base; greater problems of agency and community coordination; a relative over-supply of available labour;

and better access to development resources. All these greatly affect the ways in which ELD initiatives actually play themselves out in metropolitan versus non-metropolitan communities.

IV. EDUCATION AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ARE ALREADY CLOSELY CONNECTED IN OECD NATIONS

60. In a fundamental sense, there is nothing new or innovative in the idea that there is a vital relationship between these two spheres. Complex and dynamic linkages have long existed, even if they have been largely ignored or overlooked by policymakers and practitioners. Thus, the critical issue is not whether education and local development are (or should be) connected for the fact is that they are already inextricably intertwined. Rather, the key question is what kind of relationships between them should governments sanction and support.

V. WHILE A LACK OF OFFICIAL RECOGNITION AND ACTION HAS NOT DIMINISHED THE ELD BOND, IT HAS MEANT THAT THE NATURE AND CONSEQUENCES OF THESE CONNECTIONS REMAIN UNCONTROLLED.

61. Many of the relationships between education and development are subtle, indirect, and often inadvertent--but this has not rendered them insignificant. Because ELD issues tend to transcend the mandate of sectorially-organised government departments, these issues are often ignored by everyone and their impacts occur in a haphazard manner. This is not an advantageous situation.

VI. WHILE EDUCATION MUST BE A PARTNER IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS, ITS ROLE IS ESSENTIALLY A SUBORDINATE ONE.

62. There can be no meaningful economic development in the absence of human resource development. Thus, education can, does, and should play a vital part in local economic development initiatives. Nevertheless, meeting the pressing economic needs of disadvantaged or marginal local communities dictates that economic agencies and strategies must play the lead role in the development process. For example, education is an irreplacable factor in youth employment

and yet, changes in the economy and in the labour market (rather than in education) are ultimately responsible for aggrevating or alleviating high youth unemployment rates.

VII. CONNECTING EDUCATION AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CAN HAVE EITHER POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE EFFECTS.

62. It is imperative to avoid the simplistic notion that <u>any</u> linkage between education and local development is a beneficial one. The ELD case studies point out a variety of positive impacts. However, there are also some ELD connections which are clearly destructive. For example, education and development are intimately connected in "company towns" where very inadequate schools are tolerated (if not encouraged) by the company because they ensure a surplus pool of cheap, docile labor and reduce the likelihood that the local economic order will be called into question. Similarly, rural education programmes which ensure the outmigration of the community's brightest and most capable youths may have a variety of justifications, but there is no avoiding the fact that their impact on the local community is almost always negative and occasionally devastating.

VIII. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION <u>CAN</u> AFFECT THE NATURE AND QUALITY OF THE ELD RELATIONSHIP.

64. Although historically the ELD link has existed despite, rather than because of, government policies, it is equally evident that governmental action can fundamentally alter this relationship (for better or worse) in a given local community. The point is that formulating appropriate governmental policies and practices in this area is not a waste of time or energy. Indeed, the ELD field may prove to be a rare target of opportunity for creative governmental action.

IX. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE LOCAL POPULATION IS THE CHIEF BENEFICIARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR OWN COMMUNITY.

65. Sadly and ironically, many of the efforts ostensibly intended to promote local development have actually occurred at the expense

and to the detriment of the indigenous resident population. As a rule, development done by the local community is more successful and beneficial than development done to the community against its will by "outsiders" from the public or private sector. "Grass-roots" (or "indigenous" or "self-reliant" or "bottom up") development strategies carry with them the need for extensive educational initiatives of both the formal and non-formal variety. Government assistance should reflect this reality.

X. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE AND PLURALISTIC IN ORDER TO REFLECT THE DIVERSITY OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

66. The primacy of local circumstance must be respected and built upon in any sound ELD strategy. There is no "one best system" or single national or international model around which all ELD activity should revolve. The current need is for governmental action in support of locally-relevant, locally-operated ELD innovations, rather than a standardised strategy that is designed and implemented on a national basis.

XI. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION SHOULD FOSTER EFFECTIVE AND ACTIVE COOPERATION BETWEEN EDUCATION AUTHORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES.

67. For ELD initiatives to succeed, there is a critical need for meaningful coordination among relevant government agencies at all levels. The stakes are too high to allow agencies on either side to ignore each other or to work at cross-purposes. At a minimum, this cooperation and coordination must exist at the informational and planning levels. However, the creation of ELD "joint ventures" is an alternative which should be seriously considered by Member governments.

Conclusions about the Role of Formal Education in Rural Development

I. THE ENORMOUS POTENTIAL OF RURAL SCHOOLS TO FUNCTION AS COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS HAS REMAINED LARGELY UNTAPPED.

68. Despite all the rhetoric about rural schools (particularly small village schools) being the "heart of the community" there are

surprisingly few examples of rural-community partnerships actively functioning at a substantive, rather than symbolic, level. Nevertheless, the places where these partnerships do exist make clear that the potential for rural schools to actually operate as vital community institutions is remarkable. Helping schools to perform this role is a necessary first step toward building a positive relationship between formal education and local development.

II. THE BASIC ELD-RELATED PURPOSE OF FORMAL EDUCATION IS TO ESTABLISH THE PRE-CONDITIONS FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT.

59. Although schools occasionally play a direct economic role by virtue of being a major local employer or through experimental schemes like the school-based enterprises, this is not their fundamental contribution to local development. Rather, their task is to create a cadre of young people possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to become responsible and productive individuals who are able to contribute to the community's development, if they so choose. This implies that educators must understand and act to enhance the ELD linkages which exist (albeit indirectly) at every level of the education system. For example, at the pre-school level, the ELD connection can be found in the fact that these early childhood programmes allow mothers to seek local employment, and also serve to reduce the isolation (and reinforce the community identity) of rural children and parents alike. At the primary school level, the socialisation process--e.g. the vision of the "good life" (and where to find it) imparted to children--has a direct bearing on later attitudes to the local community and its development prospects. At the secondary level, the curriculum and its relevance to life in the local community has major ELD implications as does student exploration of options for employment or further education. At the vocational/technical school level, the ELD link can be seen in the appropriateness of the training offered to the structure of the local economy and the characteristics of the local labor market. And finally, at the university level, the extent to which the

traditional tasks of research, service and teaching are focused on rural needs and rural possiblities is an indication of their utility from an ELD perspective--as is the degree to which individuals desirous of living/working in a rural community are prepared to do so successfully because of their education. The point is simply that by establishing (or failing to establish) the correct pre-conditions, the formal education system profoundly affects the entire local development process.

III. THE LOCATION OF SCHOOLS IS A KEY FACTOR IN LINKING EDUCATION AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, ESPECIALLY AT THE PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL.

70. Rural schools are a major source of community identity and community pride. The closure of the local rural school often has the (unintended) consequence of seriously eroding a small community's sense of self-worth--and thereby reducing its motivation and ability to engage in local development activities. The point is that while good schools in a particular rural community are rarely an incentive for local development, the absence of schools is a powerful disincentive to attracting and retaining not only businesses but also the young families who would accompany them. Thus, education policymakers have to become more sensitive to the development implications of decisions (like school closures) previously made strictly on the basis of education system-oriented criteria.

IV. THE STRATEGY OF USING EDUCATION PRIMARILY TO PROMOTE INDIVIDUAL MOBILITY IS REACHING THE POINT OF DIMINISHING RETURNS.

71. Particularly for young people coming from isolated rural communities the relationship between geographic mobility and socio-economic mobility was tightly interwoven. In other words, the message long communicated to students (whether intentionally or unwittingly) by the education system, by employment training programmes and even by the media was that economic opportunity was primarily to be found outside their home communities. This was a powerful message and the known opportunities at home (which were often

marginal) could not begin to compete with the lure of unknown (but supposedly excellent) opportunities elsewhere. However, there is now a growing recognition that the 'success' achieved in this manner comes with a much higher social and economic cost to both individuals and society as a whole than anyone had originally anticipated. Moreover, the centres of economic opportunity to which youths flocked have become saturated in recent years and cannot productively absorb or utilize all their own young people, let alone a continuing influx of rural migrants. Accordingly, the economic reality behind geographic mobility--the existence of economic centres to which country migrants could go and be reasonably certain to find 'good' (or at least better) economic opportunities--is perhaps no longer a reality at all. For more and more young people from poor, working class or even middle class backgrounds, going from the countryside to the city (or even from one country to another) has not resulted in the 'better life' they envisaged. Indeed, much of the current movement can be characterised as a shifting of old deprivations to new locales.

V. THE "OPTION TO STAY" IN RURAL COMMUNITIES SHOULD BE GIVEN HIGHER PRIORITY BY THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

72. The notion here is not one of restricting any individual's progress or possibilities. The traditional "option to leave" should and will continue to exist as a viable choice for rural youths. Now, however, it may be wise to supplement and balance the traditional encouragement of individual migration by using formal and non-formal educational mechanisms in order to explore and promote the options to stay in the local area, without a major sacrifice of social and economic aspirations. To be effective, it is clear this new educational emphasis must be directly tied to the effort to expand and diversify the local economic base. Training youths simply to fit into the long-established (and frequently declining) local economic pursuits is neither particularly productive nor what is meant here by creating a real option to stay. Rather the intention must be to link these

education programmes with economic development programmes attempting to rejuvenate the local area through the creation of new kinds of industries, jobs, self-employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

VI. ATTEMPTS TO DEVELOP "LOCALLY-RELEVANT" CURRICULA AND TO PROMOTE "EXPERIENTIAL" EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES MERIT STRONG SUPPORT.

73. By their actions, schools present students with a powerful vision of what knowledge is important and which experiences will prove valuable in their adult lives. Schools which do not actively incorporate the community's human and physical resources; which exclude pertinent information about the local area from the curricula; and which utilize a traditional classroom format rather than an experiential one (i.e. "learning by doing") may be delivering an important anti-local development message to their students. Conversely, the creation of locally-relevant curricula and learning styles can easily and effectively tie-in with local development initiatives. Again, the intent is not to devalue basic skills or to lower the quality of education for rural students, but rather to inculcate these skills (and perhaps improve the quality of instruction) through the use of locally-relevant, experiential techniques.

VII. UPGRADING THE ROLE OF FORMAL EDUCATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT WILL REQUIRE NEW TRAINING AND RETRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR BOTH EDUCATORS AND DEVELOPMENT SPECIALISTS.

74. In order to have people capable of increasing the positive aspects of the education and local development interaction, it is first necessary to provide these individuals with the training they need to function competently and comfortably. It is important however that everyone involved in the ELD process--from schools, development agencies, and interested local communities--have access to this training, plus incentives which will facilitate their participation. This training process probably can best be carried out through a combination of community-based internships and

related academic experiences of both a formal and non-formal nature.

Conclusions about the Role of Non-Formal and Adult Education in Rural Development.

I. BOTH NON-FORMAL AND ADULT EDUCATION HAVE MADE, AND CAN CONTINUE TO MAKE, MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN OECD COUNTRIES.

75. Far from being a superfluous "add-on" to "real" (i.e. economic) development, non-formal and adult education are an essential and unavoidable part of any successful rural development programme. The fundamental value of such education is as a tool of empowerment--that is, as the means through which disadvantaged rural populations become active participants in, rather than merely passive recipients of, rural development efforts. In other words, appropriate non-formal and adult education schemes enable local rural communities to acquire the competence and the confidence necessary to plan, implement and control their own development, rather than remaining wholly dependent upon the actions of outside agencies and imported expertise.

II. WHEN AVAILABLE, FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN RURAL AREAS TEND TO BE GOVERNMENT-OPERATED, INDIVIDUALLY-ORIENTED, TECHNICALLY/SKILL-BASED, AND RELATED TO LARGE-SCALE IMPORTED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.

76. The availability of and access to formal adult education and training programmes continues to be a problem in the rural areas of OECD nations. Governmental attempts to widen the geographic distribution of post-secondary institutions (through the creation of new technical institutes, regional colleges and community colleges or through the physical decentralisation of existing programmes and institutions) have been a major step in the right direction. Nevertheless, there is often a significant discrepancy between the official catchment area and the population actually being served--with the more remote rural communities

(which may need these programmes the most) ending up being the ones least often reached. Further, the appropriateness of the courses available is also questionable. Again, the emphasis is often on individual mobility or credentialing rather than solving local community problems. Still, formal adult education and training can play an important role in preparing local people for employment in communities where development means attracting a factory or other major employer to relocate there.

III. BY CONTRAST, NON-FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS TENDS TO HAVE DIVERSE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR SPONSORS, BE COMMUNITY-ORIENTED, AND EMPHASISE CULTURAL, SOCIAL, AND SMALL-SCALE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.

77. Whether sponsored by churches, unions, businesses, community organisations, political groups, public agencies or private foundations, non-formal initiatives tend to have the strongest direct linkages to local development. Their agendas usually are derived from an analysis of local needs and concerns and their activities are designed to foster both the individual and collective capabilities required to solve pressing local problems. Most of these non-formal efforts share an operational assumption that social/cultural development and economic development are part of the same process and must be implemented in tandem. Although many of these non-formal education thrusts are poorly-funded, loosely-organised, very small-scale and otherwise marginal in regional or national terms, they have an importance locally which must not be underestimated. In fact, the vary array of actual and potential non-formal education activities was one of the most encouraging discoveries of the ELD project.

IV. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION SHOULD SEEK TO CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND INITIATIVES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.

78. The operational differences and programmatic distinctions between formal and non-formal adult education are both unnecessary and

counterproductive in a rural context. A genuinely integrated, community-based approach to local development is what is needed, not a situation in which formal and non-formal education are poorly coordinated or estranged from each other (if not adversarial). There is no inherent reason that non-formal education thrusts cannot include a stronger element of academic and technical training than is currently the case. Concomitantly, there is no reason that formal education cannot realign itself in order to address more sensitively and efficiently community needs, as well as individual ones. Productively linking the disparate elements of the education sector is a pre-requisite for an optimal linking of education and local development.

V. RURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES SHOULD BE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO ACCORD A HIGHER PRIORITY TO EDUCATION AND SOCIAL/CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THEIR OWN POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES.

79. Far too often, issues of human resource development are given only a minor or token place in the spectrum of activities generated by rural development agencies. In part, this is the result of either a lack of statutory authority to become involved to a major extent in this area or the misguided assumption that these issues are being adequately addressed by other agencies. In addition, the belief that "hard" development (e.g. building factories or other capital-intensive investments) takes precedence over "soft", i.e. human resource, development also lies behind the lack of enthusiasm for work in this area. However, increased economic activity or higher aggregate wealth in a region means little in and of itself; the distribution of this wealth and the actual beneficiaries of these activities are the critically-important criteria. The capacity of disadvantaged, marginal rural communities to reap the benefits of development is severely limited in the absence of intensive formal and non-formal adult education activities. Thus, the fact that social/cultural/skill development is vital to the success of economic development needs to be more fully acknowledged and reflected by rural development agencies.

VI. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION SHOULD SEEK TO SUPPORT RATHER THAN SUPPLANT THE DIVERSE NETWORK OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY UNDERWAY IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.

80. Government involvement in the RLD process should be more explicit and active than it has been to date. This does not imply, however, that government agencies should themselves attempt to operate a much wider spectrum of non-formal education programmes. Instead, the emphasis should be on both encouraging and tangibly supporting the existing non-governmental groups already sponsoring these efforts. This is not only a more cost-effective strategy for government involvement but it also serves to sanction the value of voluntary, community-based organisations in democratic societies. To the extent that governments are directly running non-formal rural education activities, such as agricultural extension services, priority should be accorded to ensuring that outdated, narrowly focused sectorial initiatives are redirected toward broader rural development goals.

VII. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION SHOULD PLACE THE HIGHEST PRIORITY ON RLD ISSUES AFFECTING RURAL MINORITY GROUPS, INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES, AND OTHER POPULATION GROUPS (SUCH AS LOW-INCOME RURAL WOMEN) HISTORICALLY DENIED THE FULL BENEFITS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES.

81. Building positive relationships between education and local development is an important task throughout the rural segments of OECD nations. However, the necessity of making this connection a useful one is nowhere more pressing and poignant than in the case of minority, indigenous and other "special need" populations. In part, it is a matter of governments continuing and extending their recent attempts to redress the injustices of the past. In part, it is a function of the fact that many of these minority and indigenous communities find themselves facing increasing pressures and difficult development decisions as a result of their possession of economically-important natural resources. Yet, most important, the RLD connection is crucial because these local communities (and the nation as a whole) can no longer afford to squander the human resources and productive capacity which these populations represent.